Errors Committed by Iraqi EFL University Students in Using Linking

By:

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1 Introduction

When Iraqi EFL university students listen to the speech of English native speakers, they have difficulty to understand it. This is related to many reasons. One of these reasons is that native speakers of English use linking. The problem lies in the fact that linking is not found in their native language.

In addition, it is quiet difficult for learners to use linking in their speech. First of all, if they are reading aloud a written text, there is no visual reminder of linking. Secondly, there are specific rules for linking. Not all the words of a phrase, or a clause, or a sentence undergo the rules of linking. It depends on what sounds get placed next to each other. Consequently, the learners find difficulty to put these rules into practice (Kenworthy, 1990: 115).

This study aims at:

1- Assessing Iraqi EFL university students' achievement in recognizing and producing linking.

2- Assessing their achievement in the written and spoken performance of linking.

3- Identifying the points of difficulty which they encounter in using linking.

4- Finding out the reasons beyond their errors and the suitable solutions posited to deal with such errors.

In view of the preceding aims, it is hypothesized that:

1- Most Iraqi EFL university students do not use linking in their speech.

2- The total achievement of such students of the written performance is expected to be better than their achievement of the spoken one.

3- Their performance at the recognition level is anticipated to be better than theirs at the production one.

4- Any words of a sentence are enunciated with linking.

The researcher adopts the following steps to achieve the objectives of this study.

1- Producing, an exposition of English linking depending on the literature available in this field.

2- A test has been submitted to Iraqi EFL university students in order to pinpoint the difficulties they face in using linking.

3- Analyzing the results of the test, on the bases of which conclusions have been presented.

This study is limited to third year students, Department of English, College of Education, University of Babylon during the academic year (2006-2007). They have been taught this topic during their second year.

2 Linking

Linking is one of the aspects of connected speech. When English speakers talk they produce a number of phonemes that belong to the words they are using in a more or less continuous stream, the listener in turn recognizes them (or most of them) and receives the message. However, phoneticians have felt that it is necessary to draw attention to the way the end of one word is joined to the beginning of the next word (Roach, 2002: 47).

Kenworthy (1990: 9) states that English people do not generally pause between words when they speak, but they transfer smoothly from one word to the following one.

2.1 Definition of Linking

Linking is a term used in phonology to denote a sound which appears between two syllables or words, for ease of pronunciation, as in the English linking *r* in *car and lorry* (Crystal, 2003a:464).

It is a process in continuous speech which joins the final sound of one word or syllable with the initial sound of the next one. In English, words ending in a tense vowel and the next word or syllable begins with a vowel are usually linked with a glide. Therefore, a phrase like "*be able*" sounds as /biːjeɪbl/. In other words, we feel that there is a sound /j/ which joins the two words "*blue ink*" /bluːwɪŋk/ sounds as though there is /w/ between '*blue*' and '*ink*'. In some varieties of English, an intrusive /r/ is inserted between two words. The first word ends with a vowel sound and the next one begins with a vowel, as in "*saw Ann*'' or "*media event*". When a word or syllable ends in a consonant cluster and the next word launches with a vowel, the final consonant of the cluster is often pronounced as part of the following syllable. For instance, "*left arm*" is usually enunciated as if it were "*lef tarm*" (Richards and Schmidt, 2002: 312).

In English, the linking *r* is the most common example of this process, as when the *r* in *guitar* is pronounced before a word or syllable beginning with a vowel (Crystal, 2003b: 274).

2.2 Rules of Linking

In this section, we deal with rules of linking. Such rules are of significance to manage linking.

2.2.1 Vowel to Vowel Linking

When one word terminates with a vowel sound and the next word begins with a vowel sound there is a smooth link between the two to ease the

transition between the two words. Vowel to vowel linking encompasses the following:

2.2.1.1 Linking r

Some accents of English are described as rhotic, which means that the letter *r* is enunciated wherever it occurs (as in *doctor* or *hard*), the /r/ phoneme is articulated in these words (as in /dɒktər/ and /hɑːrd/). Most dialects of American English, Irish and certain British regional accents are examples of rhotic accents. Other accents are non-rhotic, and do not enunciate the /r/, so we get /dɒktə/ and /hɑːd/. RP (Received Pronunciation) is non-rhotic. However, when there is a written *r* at the end of a word and it occurs between two vowel sounds, speakers with non-rhotic accents often articulate phoneme /r/ to link the preceding vowel to a following one (Kelly, 2000: 111).

"Her English is excellent." /hɜːr'ɪŋglɪʃ/

"Her German is absolutely awful, through!" /hɜː dʒɜːmən/

"My brother lives in London." /'brʌðə lɪvz/

"My brother always phones at the wrong time." /'brʌðər 'ɔːlweɪz/ (ibid.)

2.2.1.2 Intrusive /r/

Where two vowel sounds meet and there is no written letter *r*, speakers of non-rhotic accents insert the /r/ phoneme in order to ease transition. This happens when the first word ends in /ə/, /ɑː/ or /ɔː/ and the next word begins with a vowel sound. Speakers with rhotic accents tend not to do this (Gimson, 1970: 97):

"America a and Canada." /əmerɪkərən /

"Low and order." /lɔːrən/ (ibid.)

"I saw it happen." /sɔːrɪt/

"The media are to blame." / ˈmiːdɪərɑː/ (Kelly, 2000:111)

The difference between linking and intrusive /r/ is that linking /r/ is reflected in the written form, whereas intrusive /r/ is not. Intrusive /r/ does not exist in rhotic accents (where 'r' in the spelling is always enunciated) (Underhill, 1994: 66).

2.2.1.3 Linking /j/

When a word ends in /i:/, or a diphthong which finishes with /ɪ/, speakers often introduce a /j/ to ease the transition to a following vowel sound (Kelly, 2000: 111):

"We are leaving." /wiːjɑː/ (Kenworthy, 1990: 80)

"I agree wholeheartedly." /aɪjəˈgriː/ (Kelly, 2000: 111)

"I am, therefore I ought to be. /aɪjæm/ /aɪjɔːt / (Ibid.)

"They are, aren't they?" /ðeɪjɑː/ (Ibid.)

"This happens because in order to form /iː/ and /ɪ/, the mouth is in more or less the same position as it is for the start of the semi-vowel /j/" (ibid.).

2.2.1.4 Linking /w/

When a word ends in /u:/, or a diphthong which finishes with /ʊ/, speakers often insert a /w/ to ease the transition to a following vowel sound (Underhill, 1994, 67):

"Go on! Go in!" /gəʊwɒn/ /gəʊwɪn/

"Are you inside, or are you outside?" /ju:wɪn/ /ju:waʊt/

"Who is?" /hu:wɪz/

"You are." /ju:wɑ:/ (Kelly, 2000: 112)

This is because /u:/ and /ʊ/ have lip rounding and form the starting point for bilabial semi-vowel /w/ (Underhill, 1994: 67).

2.2.2 Consonant to Vowel Linking

Another aspect of linking in English is the movement of a single consonant at the end of an unstressed word to the beginning of the next if that is strongly stressed. A clear example is "*not at all*," where the /t/ of 'at' becomes initial (and therefore strongly aspirated) in the final syllable for many speakers (Roach, 2002: 47). This happens when the first word ends with a consonant sound and the next one begins with a vowel sound there is a smooth link between the two (Stanton, 2005: 1).

I need an egg. /əneg/

She likes a fried egg. /fraɪdeg/

They possess a box of eggs. /bɒksəvegz/

3 Data Collection

A diagnostic test has been designed in order to reveal the difficulties encountered by Iraqi EFL university students in manipulating linking and to identify the causes behind such errors.

The test consists of four questions (see Appendix I). The first and the third questions measure the subjects' responses at the recognition level, whereas the second and the fourth questions measure their responses at the production one. Moreover, the first and the second questions measure the subjects' written achievement, whereas the third and the fourth questions measure the subjects' spoken achievement.

The first question includes ten items in which EFL learners are asked to underline the words that are uttered with linking. The second question consists of ten items in which these learners are asked to transcribe the words that are uttered with linking. The third question is composed of five phrases in which Iraqi EFL learners listen to the recordings of a British native speaker and write down the words that are articulated with linking. After many endeavours, the researcher has obtained only five phrases in the third question. Also, the third question should be included in order to unearth whether or not Iraqi EFL learners understand native speaker when he uses linking. Finally, the fourth question is constructed of ten items in which EFL learners read the sentences paying particular attention to the words which are uttered with linking and the researcher records their speech.

Some items of the test have been taken from ***How to Teach Pronunciation*** by Gerald Kelly (2000), ***English Phonetics and Phonology: A Practical Course*** by Peter Roach (2000), ***Teaching English Pronunciation*** by Joanne Kenworthy (1990), and ***Sound Foundations*** by Adrian Underhill (1994). The items cover different types of linking. The

subjects have studied this topic in the second year in Roach's book ***English Phonetics and Phonology: A Practical Course*** where the author devotes a section to this topic entitled **"linking"**. Also, the test has been approved by a jury committee of eight experienced university lecturers a University of Babylon.

4 Data Analysis

This section deals with the analysis and discussion of the results of the test. These errors are identified and shown statistically. Endeavours have been made to point out the plausible sources of these errors so as to get some insights into the nature of the difficulties Iraqi EFL university students have encountered in this area.

In addition, this section produces the results of the subjects' performance at each question of the test in particular and at the entire test in general, with regard to the recognition and production levels as well as the written and spoken performance of linking.

The following table shows the results obtained after analyzing the subjects' performance at each item in the first question.

Table (1)

Subjects' Achievement of the First Question

No. of Item	No. of Correct Responses	%	No. of Incorrect Responses	%
1	33	55	27	45
2	16	27	44	73
3	15	25	45	75
4	37	62	23	38
5	41	68	19	32

6	8	13	52	87
7	35	58	25	42
8	15	25	45	75
9	6	10	54	90
10	25	42	35	58
Total	231	38.5	369	61.5

The results denote that the total number of the correct responses (231, 38.5%) is lower than that of the incorrect ones (369, 61.5%). It is obvious that the subjects do not know where linking occurs.

Table (2) displays the subjects' responses to the items of the second question:

Table (2)

Subjects' Achievement of the Second Question

No. of Item	No. of Correct Responses	%	No. of Incorrect Responses	%
1	6	10	54	90
2	16	27	44	73
3	26	43	34	57
4	21	35	39	65
5	7	12	53	88
6	10	17	50	83
7	4	7	56	93
8	9	15	51	85
9	3	5	57	95

10	7	12	53	88
Total	109	18.2	491	81.8

It is clear that most subjects have flunked to give the correct answers. Thus, the total number of their correct responses is (109, 18.2%), whereas that of their incorrect ones is (491, 81.8%). This denotes that the subjects have faced difficulty in producing linking.

The subjects' responses at the third question are presented in the following table:

Table (3)

Subjects' Achievement of the Third Question

No. of Item	**No. of Correct Responses**	**%**	**No. of Incorrect Responses**	**%**
1	26	43	34	57
2	2	3	58	97
3	16	27	44	73
4	23	38	37	62
5	29	48	31	52
Total	96	32	204	68

From the table above, it can be concluded that most subjects have flunked to recognize the words that are enunciated with linking. It is clear that the subjects have difficulty to understand spoken English which is uttered by native speakers of English, since the total number of their correct responses (96, 32%) is lower than that of their incorrect ones (204, 68%).

The fourth question helps us to find out to what extent Iraqi EFL university students can use linking naturally in their speech. The subjects' responses are presented in the following table:

Table (4)

Subjects' Achievement of the Fourth Question

No. of Item	No. of Correct Responses	%	No. of Incorrect Responses	%
1	8	13	52	87
2	5	8	55	92
3	32	53	28	47
4	4	7	56	93
5	23	38	37	62
6	3	5	57	95
7	2	3	58	97
8	33	55	27	45
9	6	10	54	90
10	20	33	40	67
Total	136	23	464	77

Table (4) elucidates that Iraqi EFL university students rarely use linking in their speech as the total number of their correct replies (136, 23%) is lower than that of the incorrect ones (464, 77%). Consequently, the first hypothesis which reads: **Most Iraqi EFL university students do not use linking in their speech** is confirmed.

The subjects' total achievement of the written and spoken performance of linking can be recap on the following tables.

Table (5)

Subjects' Achievement of the Written Performance

No. of Question	No. of Correct Responses	%	No. of Incorrect Responses	%
1	231	38.5	369	61.5
2	109	18.2	491	81.8
Total	340	28	860	72

In the written performance of the linking, the results obviously show that the subjects can identify easily the words that are articulated with linking, but they have encountered real difficulties in the transcription of the words that are uttered with linking, since the highest average of their correct responses in the first question is (231, 38.5%), whereas that of the second question is (109, 18.2%).

The subjects' total achievement of the spoken performance of the linking can be summed up in the following table:

Table (6)

Subjects' Achievement of the Spoken Performance

No. of Question	No. of Correct Responses	%	No. of Incorrect Responses	%
3	96	32	204	68
4	136	23	464	77
Total	232	26	668	74

From the table above, it can be concluded that Iraqi EFL university students encounter difficulties in this respect because they do not use linking

appropriately in their speech. Therefore, the total number of their incorrect responses (668, 74%) is more than that of the correct ones (232, 26%).

The following tables clarify the subjects' total achievement at the recognition and production levels.

Table (7)

Subjects' Achievement at the Recognition Level

No. of Question	No. of Correct Responses	%	No. of Incorrect Responses	%
1	231	38.5	369	61.5
3	96	32	204	68
Total	327	36	573	64

From the results above, it can be concluded that Iraqi EFL university students can recognize the words that are uttered as linking. This does not mean that they do not encounter difficulties in this level because the total number of their incorrect responses (573, 64%) is more than that of the correct ones (327, 36%).

Some Iraqi EFL university students think that the phenomenon of linking can occur with any word of a sentence. Most of them do not know that linking occurs with some (not all) words. Accordingly, the fourth hypothesis which reads: **Any words of a sentence are enunciated with linking** is verified.

The following table exhibits Iraqi EFL university students' achievement at the production level:

Table (8)

Subjects' Achievement at the Production Level

No. of Question	**No. of Correct Responses**	**%**	**No. of Incorrect Responses**	**%**
2	109	18.2	491	81.8
4	136	23	464	77
Total	245	20	955	80

Here, it can be concluded that such students encounter difficulties at the production level because they do not know how to produce linking appropriately.

This part displays the results of the subjects' performance of the entire test. The tables below present the results at all levels.

Table (9)

Subjects' Achievement of the Written and Spoken Performance

Performance	**No. of Correct Responses**	**%**	**No. of Incorrect Responses**	**%**
Written	340	28	860	72
Spoken	232	26	668	74
Total	572	27	1528	73

The highest average of the subjects' incorrect responses including eschewed responses of the written and the spoken performance of linking is (1528, 73%). This means that Iraqi EFL university students encounter more

difficulties at the spoken performance, since the total number of their correct responses in this level (232, 26%) is lower than that of their correct ones of the written performance (340, 28%).

The subjects' total performance at the recognition and production levels can be summarized in the following table.

Table (10)

Subjects' Achievement at the Recognition and Production Levels

Level	No. of Correct Responses	%	No. of Incorrect Responses	%
Recognition	327	36	573	64
Production	245	20	955	80
Total	572	27	1528	73

By the same token, the highest rate of their incorrect answers including avoided responses (1528, 73%) is higher than that of their correct ones (572, 27%). This result indicates that Iraqi EFL university students have faced more difficulty at the production level, since the total number of their correct responses at this level (245, 20%) is lower than that of their correct ones at the recognition level (327, 36%).

These results can be verified by using certain measures such as mean, as the mean for the spoken performance (11.04) is lower than that for the written one (16.1). This confirms the second hypothesis which reads: **The total achievement of such students of the written performance is expected to be better than their achievement of the spoken one.**

Similarly, the mean for the production level (11.6) is lower than that for the recognition one (15.5). This verifies the third hypothesis which states: **Their**

performance at the recognition level is anticipated to be better than theirs at the production one.

5 Sources of Errors

This section deals with error analysis and the sources of errors which are committed by Iraqi EFL learners in using linking. All learners commit errors at different stages of language learning. Errors are natural processes of language learning. Interference from the students' own language into the target language is not the only reason for making errors. There are other categories of errors which are called developmental errors such as overgeneralization. The instructor must realize that all learners make errors. These errors enable them to learn something new about the language (Harmer, 2000:62). Therefore, this section deals with the identification of errors and the reasons beyond committing certain types of errors as far as these errors are related to the learners' wrong use of linking.

In this study, most errors are attributed to interlingual transfer, intralingual transfer, context of learning, and communication strategies.

5.1Interlingual Transfer: This sort of error occurs due to effect of the students' first language into the second or foreign one. Kenworthy (1990: 125) states that "Arabic does not have linking glides and uses glottal stops to separate vowel from vowel, and vowel from consonant in consecutive words. Also, in Arabic no word begins with a vowel – a glottal stop always precedes the vowel."

Some of the subjects' wrong use of linking in item (1) of the second question and item (6) of the fourth question can be attributed to interlingual transfer.

Item (1) ***My left arm is aching.***

There are fifty four students (90%) who have transcribed ***left arm*** as /left æm/ instead of / lef tɑ:m /.

Item (6) ***Joanne wants blue ink***.

There are fifty seven students (95%) who have articulated ***blue ink*** as /blu: ɪŋk/ instead of / blu:wɪŋk /.

The researcher has noticed that Iraqi EFL learners do not tend to use linking because of the influence of their mother tongue. Besides, linking does not exist in Arabic. Therefore, the Arab learners of English tend to use the natural forms in their speech without using linking.

The total number of errors that are possibly due to the interlingual transfer is (126, 8.25%).

5.2Intralingual Transfer: This sort of error occurs due to faulty or partial learning of the target language. Such errors may be the result of the influence of one target language item upon another (Penny, 2001: 8-9).

Intralingual errors encompass the following:

Overgeneralization error, "this type of error is the result of trying to use a rule in a context where it does not belong, for example, putting a regular *–ed* ending on an irregular verb, as in 'buyed' instead of 'bought'" (Lightbown and Spada, 2003:178).

Ignorance of rule restriction i.e. "applying rules to contexts to which they do not apply" (Richards and Sampson, 1974: 70).

Incomplete application of the rules involves the avoidance of the learner to use more complex sorts of structure or forms because the learner believes that he can communicate effectively by using relatively simple rules or forms, and **false concepts hypothesized** that may derive from wrong

comprehension of a distinction in the target language (Brown, 1987: 81-3 and Chanier et al., 1992: 134).

Intralingual errors are the most popular source of the subjects' errors. To demonstrate, the reason beyond the wrong use of linking in item (6) of the first question and item (2) of the second question may be ascribed to overgeneralization.

Item (6) ***He is a prominent character***.

There are fifty two students (87%) who have thought that linking occurs with the words ***prominent character*** instead of ***he is.***

Item (2) ***She visits her aunt***.

Twenty students (33.33%) have thought that linking occurs with the word ***visits*** /vɪzɪts/ instead of ***her aunt*** /hɜːrɑːnt/.

The researcher concludes that most of them have envisaged that the phenomenon of linking can occur with any words of a sentence. Most of them do not know that linking occurs with some (not all) words of a phrase or a sentence. In other words, they generalize the rules.

Also, some subjects envisage that linking can occur with any words of a sentence or a phrase even if they are not contiguous with each other as in item (9) of the first question. Such errors may be attributed to **ignorance of rule restriction.**

Item (9) ***The saw is one of the tools of carpentry***.

Fifteen students (25%) have thought that linking occurs with the words ***saw of*** instead of ***saw is***.

Some of the errors in the second question may be attributed to **incomplete application of the rules**, as shown in item (4):

Item (4) ***Are you inside?***

Twenty five students (42%) have transcribed ***you inside*** as /juː ɪnsaɪd/ instead of / juːwɪnsaɪd /.

It is intelligible, from the item above, that some of the Iraqi EFL university students know where linking occurs but the problem is that they do not know how to transcribe or utter the words that are enunciated with linking.

False concepts hypothesized and **ignorance of rule restriction** may also be the reason beyond some of the subjects' incorrect use of linking to item (8) of the first question, item (10) of the second question, and item (2) of the third question below:

Item (8) ***They won't go on until 9 o'clock***.

Twenty seven students (45%) have thought that linking occurs with the word ***until*** instead of **go on**.

Item (10) ***I travel to Cuba and Russia***.

Twenty students (33.33%) have thought that linking occurs with the word ***and*** /ænd/ instead of ***Cuba and*** /kjuːərən/.

Item (2) ***A fried egg***.

There are fifty one students (85%) who have thought that linking occurs with the word ***fried*** instead of ***fried egg***.

From the items above, the researcher concludes that students hypothesize that linking occurs with a single word in their attempt to recognize and produce the words that are uttered with linking. This attempt has led them to this type of error. They do not discern that linking occurs with two words not with one word.

The total number of errors that are possibly due to the intralingual transfer is (744, 48.69%).

5.3Context of Learning: Such type of errors can be seen in item (3) of the second question, and item (4) of the third question:

Item (3) ***I respect law and order.***

Nine students (15%) have wrongly deemed that linking occurs with the word /ɔ:də/ instead of /lɔ:rən/.

Item (4) ***Two eggs.***

There are thirty seven students (62%) who have wrongly considered that linking occurs only with the word ***two*** instead of ***two eggs***.

From the answers above the researcher concludes that the instructors do not focus on the rules of linking.

In item (1) of the fourth question, the majority of the subjects do not use linking in their speech. In addition, they do not know how to enunciate the words which are uttered as linking.

Item (1) ***Section 'A' you are?***

Fifty two students (87%) have articulated ***you are*** as /ju: ɑ:/ instead of /ju:wɑ:/.

There are many reasons beyond such type of error. First of all, the instructors have some information about linking, but they do not know how to instruct it. Secondly, they think that linking is not so important since they can communicate without using linking, but this is not always true. In this respect, Roach (2000: 144) states that "… some English speakers and teachers still regard this [linking] as incorrect or sub-standard pronunciation, but it is undoubtedly widespread."

Furthermore, the lecturers / instructors do not use the tape recorder to teach linking. In my outlook, such forms cannot be fully mastered without using the recording of the native speaker of English for linking. Also, they think that linking is not easy to master, so they do not pay attention to it.

The total number of errors that are possibly due to the context of learning is (284, 18.59%) of the total number of the subjects' errors.

5.4Communication Strategies: In this section, we look at some of the communication strategies which the learners have been observed to use.

Avoidance. (Here, the learner tries to avoid the item which will present difficulty because he has no information to solve it) (Littlewood, 1984: 83-4). This strategy has been used by the subjects in item (4) of the first question.

Item (4) ***Not at all.***

Ten students (17%) have left item (4).

Create New Words or **Coinage** (i.e. the learner may make up a new word or phrase, in order to express the desired idea) (Faucette, 2001: 15).

Some of the errors in item (1) of the third question may be attributed to this strategy.

Item (1) ***An egg.***

Twenty students (33.33%) have solved this item in the following ways: ***a nack***, ***any***, ***an ache***, ***an ach***, ***a nache***, ***a neck***, ***an ink***, ***an leg***, ***a nake***, ***in agge***, ***a neke***, and ***a like***.

From the answers above, it is clear that Iraqi EFL university students have used this strategy because they do not understand the native speaker of English.

Guessing. (When the learners are in doubt about the correct answer they begin to guess (Brown, 2001: 309). This strategy has been used in the subjects' answers especially in item (5) of the first question**.**

Item (5) ***Jill saw it roving.***

There are eight students (13.33%) who have resolved this item in the following way: ***Jill saw it roving.***

The total number of errors that may be related to using such strategies is (374, 24.47%) of the total number of the subjects' errors.

6 Conclusions

In the light of students' responses, it can be concluded that:

1. The majority of Iraqi EFL university students do not use linking in their speech. The total number of their correct replies (136, 23%) is lower than that of the incorrect ones (464, 77%). This verifies the first hypothesis of the study.
2. They encounter more difficulty at the spoken performance. Thus, the total number of their correct responses of the written performance (340, 28%) is more than that of the spoken one (232, 26%). This confirms the second hypothesis.
3. They encounter more difficulty at the production level. For this reason, the total number of their incorrect responses at the production level (955, 80%) is higher than that of the recognition one (573, 64%). This confirms the third hypothesis.
4. The majority of Iraqi EFL university students do not know where linking occurs. In short, they think that linking can occur with any words of a phrase or a sentence. Thus, the total number of their correct responses (327, 36%) is lower than that of the incorrect ones (573, 64%). This verifies the fourth hypothesis.

5. The majority of Iraqi EFL university students face difficulties in using linking. This can be confirmed by the low rate of their correct responses (572, 27%) in comparison with the total number of their incorrect ones (1528, 73%).

6. There are five sorts of errors which are committed by the sample of the present study. The errors can be summarized as follows:

a-Wrong choice of linking (61.5%).

b-Providing correct choice, but wrong transcription (38.3%).

c-Failure to recognize the spoken linking (68%).

d-Incorrect pronunciation of the required linking (77%).

e-Giving no answer (55.3%).

7. The subjects' errors have been attributed to the following factors:

I. Interlingual transfer, whereby the subjects resort to the rules of their native language to produce linking. This type of error constitutes (8.25%).

II. Intralingual transfer, whereby the subjects use their prior knowledge of the target language. This type of error constitutes (48.69%).

III. Context of learning as little attention has been paid to linking in the textbooks of phonetics and phonology by the instructors. This type of error constitutes (18.59%).

IV. Communication strategies which are selected by the subjects to fill the gap of their knowledge. This type of error constitutes (24.47%).

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Appendix I

Q.1 Underline the words with which linking occurs.

1- My brother always phones at the wrong time.

2- We are leaving the party.

3- Jack always wants to eat.

4- Not at all.

5- Jill saw it roving.

6- He is a prominent character.

7- These are my father and grandmother.

8- They won't go on until 9 o'clock.

9- The saw is one of the tools of carpentry.

10- They watch an eagle.

Q.2 Transcribe the words that are enunciated with linking.

1- My left arm is aching.

2- She visits her aunt.

3- I respect law and order.

4- Are you inside?

5- They are here.

6- I like the pedagogy in America and Canada.

7- Who is playing badminton with her?

8- My mother is praying here.

9- The bee is a kind of insects.

10- I travel to Cuba and Russia.

Q.3 Listen to the following words. Then, write down the words with which linking occurs.

1- An egg.

2- A fried egg.

3- A box of eggs.

4- Two eggs.

5- Three eggs.

Q.4 Read the following sentences carefully paying particular attention to the words that are articulated with linking.

1- Section 'A' you are?

2- At the end, I went to the hospital.

3- Her English is exquisite.

4- The media are to blame.

5- I am, therefore I ought to be.

6- Joanne wants blue ink.

7- John and Paul possess an egret.

8- That is the car engine.

9- The job is good in Canada and England.

10- Your sister is not here.